A Sermon of repentaunce.

A verye godlye and profitable Sermon, preached at Lee in Eſſex, by Arthur Dent, *Miniſter of Gods word. And publiſhed at the requeſt of ſundry Godly and vvel diſpoſed perſons.*

1581. the 7. of March.

Ionah. chap. 2. ver. 8.

They that waite vpon lying vanities, forſake their owne mercy.

Imprinted at London for Iohn Hariſon, *and are to bee ſolde at the white Greihound* in Paules Churchyarde.

1583.

VVilliam Nordan owethe this boke

To the Reader.

ALthough I was moſt vnwilling that this poore Talent and trauaile of mine, ſhould euer haue bine broached abroad, & come to light: both becauſe it may ſeeme as a Candle lighted at noone day: alſo becauſe many other mens dooings might more worthily a great deale haue bin publiſhed, and committed vnto letters: Yet becauſe diuers which heard it preached with a liuely voyce, were very inſtant, yea, and more then importunate with me to haue it publiſhed, vſing ſuch reaſons as I could not well gainſay, I did at the laſt yeelde to their requeſt, and ſo this vntymely fruite is come abroade, to be ſolde in open markettes. Let no man bee offended that I haue not ſtrayned my ſelfe to fly an high pitch, to fome out the frothe of mans wiſdome, and to make a great ſhewe of learning

ning, by blowing the bladder of vanity, till it burſt with ſwelling. For that is not my vſe. I ſeeke eſpecially the ſaluation of the ſimple, & ignorant, & therefore ſtoupe downe to their reache and capacitie. Therfore I beſeech thee gentle Reader, accept my good meaning: Reade this without preiudice, like it as thou profiteſt, ſo ſhalt thou haue prayſe of God, & comfort in thy conſcience.

A. D.

The Text. Luke. 13. 5.

I tell you nay: but except you repent you shall likewise perishe.

THe occasion of these wordes of our Lorde & Sauiour Jesus Christ, was because there were certeine that shewed him of ỳ Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their owne sacrifices: That is, murthered them as they wer sacrificing: and so their blood was mingled with ỳ blood of ỳ beastes which were sacrificed. Those men therfore thought that these Galileans were greater sinners then al other Galileans, because they had suffered such things. And ỳ those 18. also, vpon whō ỳ Tower in Syloam fel & slewe them, were sinners aboue al men, that dwelt in Jerusalem. Wherein they did vtter a secret corruption naturally ingendred in all men, ỳ is redy sharply to see into the sins of others, & severely to censure them: but in the mean while to flatter thēselues, & to be blinfolde in seeing their owne sinnes. For these men thought, because the like iudgementes did

not fall vpon them, therfore they were safe inough, they were not so great sinners, but rather highly in the fauour of God. According as many do falsly suppose, that those are alwaies the worst sort of people whom God doth most strike, and presse with his punishing hand, hauing forgotten that God doth not kéep an ordinary rate here below, to punish euery man as he is worst, or to fauour & cocker him as he is best, but only taketh some exãples, as he thinketh good, for the instruction & aduertisment of others, and to be as it were looking glasses, wherin euery man may see his owne face, yea & his owne cause handeled, and that God is a seuere reuenger of sin, ỳ al men may learn by the example of some, to tremble & beware, least peraduenture they be worthilye constrained to kéepe their owne turnes, and to know what they haue deserued. These mẽ which brought these newes to our Sauiour christ had not takẽ forth this lessõ, whereupõ our Sauiour is iustly occasioned to correct their erroneous & sinister iudgements, & to teach thẽ ỳ they must not reioyce at the sinful punishment of others, but rather to be instructed thereby to repentance.

And further to signifie, that God doth not

not alwaies most punishe the most notorious offenders, as Murtherers, Theeues, Robbers, Whoremaisters, Blasphemers, Quarrellers, Scoffers, & such like, but reserueth them vnto the iudgment of ẏ great day, and as it were fatteth thē against the day of slaughter: and therfore he answereth them negatiuely, and saieth naye, or not so, but except you repent, you shal all likewise perish, as if he should say, are you of this opinion indéed, that only monstrous sinners are punished in this world, and others let alone: or that the Galileans, & these eightéene vppon whom the Tower in Siloam fell, were greater sinners then all others? Or doe you thinke because the same iudgements haue not light vppon you, therfore you shall steale away in the darke, & escape the iudgement of God? No no, you are deceiued. For I say vnto you, that except you mourne and lament for your sinnes, and fall to some agréement with God in tyme (you I saye, euen you which are so readye to condemne others, and iustifie your selues) shall not onely perish with the like iudgementes in this present world, but bée euerlastingly condemned in the worlde to come. So that our Sauiour in so saying.

doth thunder down a most dreadful sentẽce vpon all our heades: for he concludeth and setteth it down, ý al men liuing vpon ý face of the earth, whether they be high or lowe, riche or poore, young or olde, noble or vnnoble, learned or vnlearned, simple or politik, of what estate, degrée, and condition soeuer they be liuing, & dying without repẽtance, shall perish and be damned in hel fire for euer. The Scriptures are full of such thunderbolts: Ioh. 3.18. Hee that beleeueth not is damned already. And 2. Cor. 13. ver. 5. Prooue your selues whether you are in the fayth, examine your selues. Know yée not your selues ý Iesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates? Where the Apostle flatly setteth down, that al those which haue not Christ dwelling in their heartes by faith, which is the houshold sister of repẽtãce, are no better then reprobates, castawayes and condemned persons. But because the most people in these daies are grossly deceiued in repentance, both cõcerning what it is, what it meaneth, what it worketh, what bée the qualities and conditions of it, which bée the causes, & which be the lets and hinderãces, & also why, when, and wherfore we should repent. Therefore I haue in present intent

to

to teach first what is repentãce. Secondly, which be his qualities & effects. Thirdly, when we should repẽt. Fourthly, wherfore we should repent: And last of all what letteth vs from repentance. Which order, and method of teaching although some may mislike (as indeed with me it is not ordinary) yet considering the matter I haue in hand, I think it not inconuenient. But ỳ matter. Repentance is an inwarde sorrowing, and continual mourning of the hart & conscięce for sinne, ioyned with faith, & both inward, & outward amendment. Inwarde I say in changing the thoughtes & affections of the heart: & outward in chaunging the words, and works from euil to good. This repentance no doubt was in Dauid, who whẽ he was couertly reproued by ỳ Prophet Nathan, & his sinnes laid before his eyes, did not stubbornely defende them, and so iustle against God: nor yet secretly excuse them, & daub them ouer, but cried out in the bitternesse of his heart: I haue sinned, & therupõ made the 51. Psalme. A Psalm indeede full of dolour & heauines: Wherin the Prophet bewayleth his fals, lamenteth his sinnes, & praieth euen for a new hart & a new spirit, new thoughtes, new affections, new pur-

poses

poses of amendment of life. So that in Dauid we may see an inward sorrowing, a lasting griefe (as the booke of Psalmes doeth euery where declare, which layeth him out as it wer in an Anatomy) yea, and greate reformation, both in inward and outward sinnes. Here therfore behold what is repẽtance. Likewise S. Peter through infirmitie hauing denied his Lord & maister christ, & being punched of his own conscience, and awakened with the alaram of a poore cocks crowing, wẽt out of ẏ court of Pilate with a heauy heart weeping bitterly, & euer after stoutly professing christ euen vnto ẏ death. See then what is Repentance. The Prophetes in the olde testament exhorting the rebellious Iewes vnto repentance, vse commonly an Hebrew verbe which signifieth turne yee, or return yee & come back againe, by the which metaphor is meant, ẏ like as a man that is straied farre out of his way, must turn quite back again ẏ cõtrary waye: So those that haue strayed from the waies of godlines to the waye of sinne, must come back againe, as fast as euer they went forward, & altogether chang the course of their life: so that repentance is an earnest turning vnto God with al our heart, soule and

mind

minde. Saint John Baptist, and the Apostles in the new testament exhorting vnto repentance, vse a greeke word which signifieth a changing of the minde afterward, or after wit, so that those which through their folly & want of former wit, haue slipped into the deepe pit, & daungerous gulfe of sin, when they come to themselues, & haue recouered their wits, wil be wise afterward, & take heede they neuer come there agayne, according to the Prouerb: The burnt child will take heede of the fire, by this time I hope you see what is Repentaunce. It is not euery sorrow, but sorrow for sinne, not for some sinne, but for all sinne, not for an houre, but for euer, not for a day, but continually, not for a weeke, but as long as wee liue. Some thinke euery sorrow is repentance: but so should worldlings repēt. Some thinke euery little pant for sinne is repentance, so should Pharaoh repent. Some thinke all weepynge and lamenting for sinne is repentaunce: so should Esau, Iudas and Cain repent. Some think euery little humbling of our selues is repentance: but so should Achab repent. Some think y good words and good purposes is repētance: but so shoulde euerye sicke manne repent.

Some

Some think ẏ reformation of wordes and dëedes, is repentance: but so should ciuil mē repent. Some think ẏ cry God mercy is repentance: and so should euery foole repent. You sée therfore how many are deceiued in repentance, but if you will sée what it is in dëede, looke back to ẏ which hath bëen sayde afore. For he ẏ will repent in good earnest, must not hang downe his head like a Bulrush for a day only, & so haue doone, nor cry from the tëeth outward, Lorde haue mercy on me, & so away: but he must make a back reckoning with diligent cōsideration of his former life. As did the Prophet Dauid. Psa. 119. ver. 59. I haue considered my waies & turned my feete vnto thy testimonies. So must euery one ẏ meaneth to repent slinke aside into some corner or out place, ẏ there he may haue roome enough to beat his own conscience, & to make his hart smart for his sinnes, by aggrauation thereof, & weighing al the circumstances, as in the 9. of Daniel: The Churche of God confesseth her sinne, not lightly but with wonderful great exaggeration, and heaping of one thing to another. So ẏ it is not enough to say I haue sinned, but to say I haue most & frayferously sinned, I haue most obstinatly, carelesly, & rebel-

rebellionsly sinned, I haue monstrously offẽded in such a place, in such a house, in such company, in such a day. In such a cozner in the dark I committed adultery closly, whẽ I thought none had sẽne me: In such a chãber I defiled my neighbozs wife: mine owne conscience doth accuse me of it. In such and such company I haue bẽne dzunke, I haue spoken and rayled against Gods wozde, I haue mocked the Preachers, I haue spared no othes, noz filthy spẽche, & now O Lozd, Lozd, what an vgley monster, & wzetched villaine am I. Here I stand befoze thy pzesence al naked, blind, wounded, pooze, wzetched, & miserable, hauing deserued a thousand dãnations, if thou shouldst enter into iudgement, & try the law with me. Therefoze I beseech thée shew pitie, & compassion vpõ me. Anoynt my wounds with the oyle of mercy: restoze me my sight, clothe my nakednes, enrich me that am pooze, strengthen me ỳ am weake: helpe me vp that am fallẽ: oh bid me not farewell. The infant ouercõmeth his mother with crying, the childe his father with weeping, & ỳ seruãt his master by entreaty, & wilt not thou be intreated O lozd? Thus I say if euery man would speak in his conscience to God, & thus narrowly

or more narrowly examine himselfe, vndoubtedly he were in the way of repentãce.

But alas it is a woꝛld to sée how ẏ blind Bullards, & crooked cancre woꝛmes of this woꝛld, goe awꝛy frõ this ruke, deceiuing thẽ selues wᵗ the bare title & naked name of repentance. Many in déede can talke of it: but fewe walke in it. Many speake of it: but fewe feele it. Many describe it: but fewe know it. It is hid & locked vp from the woꝛld, & reuealed only to Gods chilꝺꝛen. Many think they haue caught it, whẽ they haue but the shadow of it. It is so high ẏ fewe cã reach it. It is so déepe ẏ fewe can come to ẏ bottom of it. It is so narrow ẏ fewe can pearch into it. So wide ẏ fewe can comprehend it. So slippery ẏ fewe can hold it. So secrete ẏ fewe can finde it. Wherfore my deare brethꝛen, I beséech you let vs pꝛay vnto our God, that he would reueal vnto vs this mysterie, which is hid from the woꝛld, ẏ we may truly sée it, & know it, find it & feele it to our endles cõfoꝛt, thꝛough Chꝛist Jesus: which grace hée graunt vs.

But now to the second point concerning the qualities & fruites of repentance. Our special qualitie of repentance is alwaies to bring with it remission of sinnes: foꝛ when

true

true repentance goeth before, there remissiō of sins must necessarily follow after, not ẏ repentance deserueth remission of sinn, but because where God worketh repētāce, ther he pardoneth sin because of his promise. As in Ezech. 18. 27. When the wicked turneth away from his wickednes that he hath cōmitted, & doeth that which is lawfull and right, he shal saue his soul aliue. And again, Esay 55. 7. Let the wicked forsake his waies, & the vnrighteous his own imaginations, & return vnto the lord, & he wil haue mercy vpon him. So here wee see to whom forginenes of sins, & the mercies of God belōgeth: Namely to the penitent sinners, to those ẏ leaue sinne, & imbrace Godlines: to those ẏ forsake their own waies & imaginations, & turn vnto the lord. And as for such as walk on in their owne waies, & followe the delights of sin wͤout any sorow, or purpose to leaue thē, they haue nothing to do wͤ the mercy of God: & though Jesus Christe had suffered an hūdred deaths (which could not be) yet shal no vnpenitent sinner haue remission of his sins by his death, nor any other benefits of his passion, for they belōg only to his Churche, & chosen people here vpō the earth. He therfore that is not of the

Church, he that is not grafted into Christe by faith, he that is not a member of his mistical body, can inioye nothing by Christes death. If any man abide not in me, he is cast foorth as a branch, and withereth, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they burne. Ioh. 15. 6. We reade in the 29. of Deuteronomie.

How God barreth all stubborne sinners from his mercy, and doeth moste terribly shote out against them. He that heareth ye words of this curse, and blesseth himself in his hart, saying, I shal haue peace, althogh I walke according to the stubbornesse of mine own hart, thus adding drunkennesse to thirst: the Lord wil not be merciful unto him, but then the wrath of the Lord, & his ielousie shall smoke against that man, and euerye curse that is written in this booke, shall light vppon him. So that God sayth plainly, he hath no mercy for such as walke in the vaine delights of sinners, & in ye stubbornes of their owne heart, adding drunkennes to thirst, that is one horrible sin to another. Yet for al this it is a wonder to see, how ye blinde wormes of this earth deceiue themselues. For they think whatsoeuer they say, whatsoeuer they do, be it good, be it euil

whether they repent, or not repēt, yet they shalbe saued by Christes death, as though they would make it a bawd to their sins, & so worke that villany against Christ. I hope to be saued by Christs death, as wel as the best of thē all faithsome. But where is thy repentaunce thou miserable wretch?

Doest thou thinke that Gods mercy is common to all? & Christs death a bawd for our sinnes? No, no, when it commeth to the vpshot, thou shalt stoppe shorte. For it will proue farre other wise: for thou shalt finde Gods mercy turned into Justice: and Christes death into Wormwood: because thou hatedst knowledge, and choosedst not the feare of the Lorde. Thus you see my deere brethren, that Repentaunce must nedes go before forgiuenes of sinnes, and where it leadeth not the way, there the gates of gods mercy are shut vp. & this is the first quality of repentance. It hath also an other condition, and that is, to alter and change men frō y they were before, not in the substaunce & proportion of the body: but in the qualities & conditions of the mynd. For whosoeuer hath truely repented, you shall by and by see a maruellous, and woonderfull change in him, so that hee will not dog as

hathath done, nor speake as he hath spoken, nor company as he hath cõpanied, nor play the good fellow (as they tearm it) as he was wont to do, nor runn to the same excesse of riot hee was wont. And this is it ỳ amazeth the world, & causeth them to bristle & fome at the mouth like wild Bores, and to speak euil of thẽ ỳ are turned vnto god. For the world loueth his owne, & cannot abide, ỳ God should pluck one fether frõ his wings. But repentance doth violently pull vs out of the clawes of Sathan, & change the from the conditions of the worlde, for it maketh of proud, humble, of hartfull, harmelesse, of cruell, meeke, of Wolues, Lambes, of Lyons, Sheepe, of adulterers, Chaste liuers, of Drunkards, sober men, of swearers, reuerent speakers, of haters, louers, of despisers, Imbracers, of scoffers, followers, of earthly, heauenly, of deuils, Saints. Al this worketh repentance. Paule trauelled towards Damascus a Wolfe, a persecuter, a blood sucker, [illegible]ter, a despiser: but ere he came there, he was quite changed, & cleane of an other mynd. So mighty was he ỳ met him by the way: When Jesus Christ sent down the holy Ghost vpon his Disciples, [illegible] his promise, ther were [illegible]

of Hierusalem, which mocked & sayde, they are full of new wine: But the same men cryed out by and by after, men and brethrē, what shall we doe to be saued.

Here was a most wonderful and sodayn chaunge. Loe then the force of Repentance, whē God striketh it into the hart of mā, & driueth the naile to the head as they say. It effecteth ỹ which al the wisdom & policie of man, is not able to bring to passe, no when they haue prolled hither and thither, and laid their heads together, & sought al the corners of their wittes, yet can they not tell which way to turne their hand, or where to begin to chaunge the hart of a mā, & to cōuert him to God. Therfore Repētance is stronger then al the whol world, & worketh that which all men with their naturall wittes, fine heads, & deepe deuises cannot compasse, for the conuersion of a sinner, is a worke supernaturall. Here then wée haue a glasse to behold our selues in, whether euer we haue repented or no. For if wée [illegible] not this chaunge & alteration in vs, we [illegible] not repented, & so consequently remain vnder damnation. Therfore, let euery man looke vnto himselfe, for marke how much he is chaunged, & altered from his former euil wayes,

so much hath he repented. And he that is the same mã, he was three, foure, eight, nay thirtie yéeres agoe, surely, surely, hee hath not repented, and therefore abydeth in damnation. I maruell then how those men, which neuer felt any change, or alteration wrought in thē, nay, whose cōsciēces tell them that they are not chāged, neknow what it meaneth, cā haue any hope of saluatiō. Vnles peraduenture they beléeue not this doctrine, or think it to be false. I will send ouer these men to such as haue byn in ỳ like case they now are, & yet thought they might doe well enough for all that, although both blinde in iudgement, and corrupt in conuersation. I haue known & do know men, which before their conuersion, and inward chaunge, were counted as honest men, as euer brake bread, and as substantiall men as any could be, as true dealers, vpright liuers, & good housekéepers as any of their neighbours: yea, and they had the same opinion of themselues too: And yet notwithstanding when they haue felt repentaunce working this chaunge and alteration in them, through the power of the spirite, at the preaching of the worde, and when they haue had new hearts giuen them to serue better,

better, and new eyes to sée better, as men come out of a dampe, haue woondred and maruailed at the palpable and grosse darknesse they were in before, and haue burste forth into these words, that they would not be in the same case they were afore, no not for al ẏ worlds goods, for if they should haue died in that case, they wer sure they should haue béene damned: But I pray you what case were they in before, were they not good honest men? and wel accounted of, and honest liuers, and wel taken where so euer they came? Surely they were so taken in ẏ world, but now they think far otherwise of thēselues, their eies being opened and their iudgements enlightened, for now they sée ẏ they saw not before, nowe they vnderstand ẏ God condemneth many whom the world iustifieth. Methinketh this example should make ciuill & worldly men sée and suspecte themselues, and know their owne miserye before GOD. For these men were as good as they before their conuersion, & yet afterward confesse ẏ they were plunged to the bottom of hel, and drowned in ẏ deapth of damnation. Hée ẏ hath eares to heare, let him heare, and hee that hath eyes to sée let him sée: for if menne wil still sooth them

selues for al this, ẏ they shal bée saued with out feeling any chãge or work of repẽtance.

It wil cost them ful déere in the ende, for Christs words wil proue true, that who so euer repenteth not shal be damned, that is, who so euer doth not feele in himselfe what is Repentaunce, and finde in himselfe the qualities thereof shall bée condemned. For where repentance is, there be the qualities of Repentance, & where the qualities be absent, there is no true repentance. So ẏ wher Christ saith: Except ye repent ye shal al perish: It is all one as if he had faide, excepte ye knew the truth of repentance; except yée can proue unto your cõsciences the forgiuenes of your sinnes, except you feele a change & alteration in the bottom of your heart, of al your former lewd waies and misdemeanour, you shal surely perish and be damned. But let vs yet a little further search out the qualities of repentance, the Apostle in the seuenth Chapter of the secondbe Epistle to the Corinthians setteth downe seuen notable qualities, & effects of Repentance. The first of them he nameth Care. For behold saith he, this thing that you haue bin godly sory, what Care it hath wrought in you, ẏ is, an earnest studie, & as it were a taking

thought

thought to please God. For where true repentance hath ben wrought, there followeth great care afterward. Care I say to live in the obedience of God, Care to keepe a good conscience, Care to reforme our houholds, Care to instruct wiues, Children and seruants in the knowledge of God: Care to pray with the morning & euening: and generally care to performe all duties belonging vnto God, so that repentance is not a careleſſe, but a carefull thing. Let not men thinke therfore, that although they welter in the careleſnes of the flesh, & sleepe in security all the dayes of their life, yet their repentance is good enough, yea and though they spend whole daies, nights, monethes, and yeeres in vanities, playes, and pastymes, in idlenes, fond delights, pleasure, and voluptuousnes, in negligence of all duties, forgetfulnes of God, and contempt of all good things: Yet for all this they repent for their sinnes, and hope to be saued as well as any other. But alas how can these things stand together, to repent for sinne, & to delight in sinne, to hate sinne, & loue sinne, to flie from sinne, and to followe after sinne. But these men I perceiue, would faine make Saynt Paule a lyar. For hee saith, a man hath ne-

ner repented, except hee bee carefull afterward to please God. They say they doe repent, & haue repēted: although they liue neuer so wretchedly, & carelesly. But when all licentious & lewd liuers, filthy whoremongers, healthy belligods, & careless caitiffes, come to the kingdome of God, and are saued: then shal these men also come with thē to be saued by careless repentance.

The next quality & effect of Repentance is named, clearing of our selues, that is, discharging of our selues, when sinne doth accuse vs, and lay thinges to our charge, for when sinne and Sathan doeth terrifie the conscience of the poore penitent sinner, by and by hee fleeth vnto God and asketh forgiuenes through Jesus Christ, and so cléereth himselfe, and maketh his Apologie against sin and Sathan, like as a man y is presented into the Court, vpon suspition of whoredom, or any other notorious crime, must cléere himselfe by witnesses, of that which is layd to his charge. So the conscience that is cited by Sathan before the Iustice, and iudgement seate of God, cleareth it selfe by repentaunce, and asketh forgiuenesse through Jesus Christ. So that here we may see a wonderfull fruite of a peni-

tent

lent conſcience, it cannot abide the accuſa-
tions of ſinne: It cannot be quiet till it bée
reconciled vnto God: and ſo haue peace
within it ſelf. For this is to be noted in the
godly man, that when hée hath committed
any ſinne, and his conſcience telleth him of
it, by and by he féeleth lead within him, and
is all heauye, and cannot ſléepe quietly, till
he haue gotten into ſome corner, where hee
may mourne, and lament to the full, and
confeſſe, and laye open himſelfe vnto God,
& ſo cleare him ſelfe through Chriſt Jeſus,
his conſcience bearing him witnes that his
ſinne is forgiuen. Whereas contrariwiſe
the vngodly manne, when his conſcience
accuſeth him of ſin, he diſpatcheth away all
ſuch thoughtes, and treadeth them vnder
foote, and by and by calleth for a payre of
Cardes, or tables, & ſome merry companion
to driue away the time, & to put out al ſuch
thoughts out of his head, and ſo indeede hée
increaſeth them more and more, & cauſeth
them to rancle inwardly.

The third quality is called indignation,
that is, a mortal and deadly hatred againſt
ſinne: as when a man doeth ſhudder and
ſhake, and as it were grynde his téethe at
the remembraunce of his ſinnes: for this is

alwaies

alwayes in the penitent person, to loth and abhor al sin frō his hart, both his own sins, & the sins of other, & to hate it as the diuell himself, which is the author of it, and to flee from it, as from the very cutthroat, & hāgman of his soule, and to know it to bee the only thing that blyndeth, that hardeneth, ỹ separateth from God, and procureth all plagues, and diseases, both of bodye & soule against vs. Therefore, he spitteth at it in defiance, and disdaineth it, and stoppeth his nose at the stink of it, wher soeuer hee smelleth it.

The fourth thing is feare, which is a certayne awe of God, when a man is afraid to displease him. For the penitent person feareth alway, and being priuy to his own infirmity & weaknes (when God neuer so little withdraweth his grace, and leaueth him alone) worketh his saluation with feare & trēbling. He wil not presume vppon former grace to commit any sin, or flatter himselfe in the mercy of God, & in ỹ thinges ỹ he hath already tasted of God, to yēlde to some little sinne, thinking he may do ỹ, and be the child of God well enough, because some of Gods childrē haue fallen into greater, but rather he trembleth at the least mo-

tion

tion of sinne & is afraid of the temptations, which Sathan trumpeth in his way, and is afrayde when the temptations of sinne are vpon him, to satisfie the hunger of sinn, but rather he fighteth against sinne, when sinn fighteth against him, & presenteth the feare of God before his eyes (as godly Ioseph in the assault of Putiphars wife) to bee as it were a Tower of defence and welspring of life, to anoyd the snares of death.

The fift thing is desire, that is a hungring, and thirsting after righteousnes.

For the penitent man is ravished with desire of good things. He desireth to be euery day better then other: he desireth to learne euery day some sin: hee desireth to pray: hee desireth new knowledge, & newe vnderstãding of heauenly things. He desireth to heare sermons, and will straine himself to heare them. Hee desireth the cõpany of the godly, he thinketh himselfe in heauen, when he is amongst thẽ. He desireth ỹ saluation of his very enimies, & prayeth for them. All these and many other such like desires are in the penitent man.

The first qualitie is zeale, which consisteth in the earnest imbracing of vertue, and hatred of vice, so that the penitent person, is

zealous

zealous in euery good thing. Zealous of Gods glory in all places, in all companyes, and amongst all persons, hee cannot abyde that Gods honour should be impeached, or his name blasphemed, or his glory trãpeled vnder foote by wicked men, but he will open his mouth to reproue the wicked, and stand stoutly in the defence of Gods glory. Hee is not like these Atheistes, and dissemblers, which are alwaies as is the company, that is godly amongest the godly: A Protestant amongst Protestantes: wicked amongest the wicked, a Papist amongst Papistes, a worldling amonst worldlings, & a swearer amongst swearers, a Weathercocke ỹ turneth with euery winde. The penitent man I say, is not of this stamp, but he is cõstant and zealous in all good thinges. Hee is zealous both against the pleasures and profites of sinne, though hee might winne a whole worlde, or pleasure himself neuer so much, by committing a sin against God, yet will he refuse it, for he hath learned from Christes mouth, that it shall not profite a man to winne all the whole world, and to lose his owne soule.

The last thing is Reuenge, that is, the

penitent

penitent person is so offended, with the sinne he hath committed, ỳ hée will bée reuenged of himselfe for it. As for example, if he haue offended in gluttonie, he wil reuenge himself by fasting two or three daies after: If he haue offended in whoredom, he will be reuenged of his lustes, by haltring, and hydeling them euer after: If he haue offended in couetous catching and polling of other mens goodes, hée will be reuenged of him selfe by restitution, as was godly and penitent Zacheus, and this indéede is a special fruite of Repentaunce, to reforme our selues in those thinges, wherein wée haue most offended. Now then you sée (my déere brethren) what lyeth in the bellie of repentance, and which be her inwardes, so ỳ wée must needs now come to the vnlasing, and vnbowelling of Christes wordes. Except ỳe repent saith he, ye shal al perish, that is: except ye haue this forenamed care, you shall all be damned: Except you haue this clearing of your selues, you shall bée damned: Except you haue this indignation, you shall al bée damned: except you haue this feare, you shal be damned: Except you haue this desire, you shal al be dãned: Except you haue this zeale, you shall all bée damned,

Except

Except you haue this repentance, you shall all bee damned.

For our Sauiour Christ doth not speak of the bare name of Repentaunce: But of Repentance with al his furniture, and appurtenances: so that whosoeuer hath not repentãce with al his qualities and effects, or at the least some measure of them, hee hath no repentaunce inwarde, and therfore shall be damned. For except yee repent yee shall all perish. But me thinketh I heare some man say. Here is nothing but damnation, damnation.

You preach nothing but the lawe: Let vs heare of the Gospel. My brethren I protest vnto you that I speake of loue, whatsoeuer I speak, I desire the saluation of you all, if I could win but two in al this congregation, I would count my self happie, I thinke that God had greatly blessed my labours.

And vndoubtedly, if I knew any nearer way to bring you vnto God, then by preaching the Lawe, to make you know your selues, surely, surely, I would vse it. For if I could be perswaded, that the preaching of the Gospel, and mercy would doe you more good: you should heare of nothing, but Gospel, Gospel, mercy, mercy. But alas, I see

that

that euery carelesse, & euery ignorant man presumeth vpon Gods mercy. I sée ye euery filthy liuer, and notorious blasphemer abuseth Gods mercy, in applying it to himselfe without repentaunce, so that they wouldde make Gods mercye a cloake for their sins; I sée that euery man would faine be flattered in his sinne, and heare of it no more, but haue the Gospel preached; which in déede belongeth not vnto thē, continuing in their stubbornes: but only to the penitēt sinner, which forsaketh himselfe, and groneth, and panteth vnder the burden of his sin. Therefore, when I sée you humbled with the cōscience of your sinnes, and grone and pant vnder the burden of [illegible], when I sée your faces blubbered with weeping, and your harts mollified, and sorrowing with care, then wil I comfort you, and cease to preach the law. But I pray you, will you steale, murder, and commit adultery, & yet heare of mercy? Wil ye mock, sweare, blasphem, and raile, & yet heare of mercy? Will you serue sinne, hate vertue, and followe your own lusts, and yet heare of mercy? Would you haue plaisters before you haue woūds? Would you haue phisick, before you be sick? Would you bée let blood, before you haue

 néede?

nites: Wouldе you not account him a foo-
lishe Phisicion, that will minister phisicke
to a whole man? Would you not thinke
him an onskilfull Surgion, that will ap-
plye a gentle salue to an olde festered sore,
and not rather corrie it? Then know now
my brethren, that because you are full of
grosse humors, you must haue strong pur-
gations: because ye are full of olde festered
wounds, you must haue corasiue salues, for
that is the best for you, & the spediest way
to recouer your health, and for as muche as
you be rough horses: you must haue a rough
rider: And hard knobbye tymbet, muste
haue hard wedges, & hard stroakes with a
beetle. We preach the lawe to driue you to
Christ, we preach iuogements to make you
seeke mercy: We preache damnation, to
bring you to saluation. But to preach mer-
cie and forgiuenes before me see their sins,
or know their miseries by the preaching of
the law, is to preach the Gospell unprouta-
bly. For, hee that is ignoraunt of the lawe,
knoweth not what misery is in himselfe:
nor what mercy is in God.

What father is there, who if his childe
should play the stubborne boy, and disobey
him

him in euery thing he commanded, would
streaue his head, and say hee were a good
boy, and not rather seuerely torrent him, &
whippe him with a rodde? What maister
will commend his seruant for doing what
he lyst and not what he commandeth him?
euen so we may not disobey, and doe euill,
and looke to be flattered too, and not rather
chidden. Let vs knowe then that although
God vse searing, launsing, corzing, and
fear thing of the bones, & other violent re-
medies, yet in the meane while hee procu-
reth our health by them. And let vs further
vnderstande, that for as much, as there is
none other meanes to draw vs to saluatiō,
but by cleansing of [illegible] vices, & the same
cleansing cannot be doen but by violence, whē
we be warned by the doctrine of the Lawe,
so as our own conscience accuse vs.

Although wee lyke well to be nowe and
then flattered, and soothed, yet let vs seeke
to bee spoken vnto earnestly, and to haue
our faultes tolde vs, and to be made asha-
med of them, and to haue our vnhonestie
discouered, and not desire to be pleased. For
it were the next way, to make vs rotte in
our own filthinesse, if we should holde it so
in secret: and it would cost vs deare the set-

[illegible] if we should be so flattered by men, [illegible] the meane season the heauenly Judge shal thunder downe vpon vs.

Therfore, when any man commeth to a sermon, let him first and formost make his reckoning to be rebuked, as méete is; and let him understand that it is for his profit, ẏ he is not soothed. And if hee haue itching eares, let him lay them away from him, assuring himselfe that als hee is foreclosed, so [illegible] shall neuer receiue the doctrine to his profit and instruction. And let him be content to haue his soars rubbed, a bowrsyed, that he may be brought to that, which is for his welfare. If a man please a sicke body, what shal become of him, shall hee giue him drink euery [illegible] of an houre? Shal he giue him wine, whereas hee shoulde giue him water? Shal he giue him Sallets? It were the next way to poyson him. To bee short, it is certaine ẏ a man doeth alwaies séeke his owne death, when he would haue men to sooth him. But now which is better either that he which hath the ordering of a sick man, should yéeld to all his desires, or ẏ he should bridle him, notwithstanding that he chafe and gnashe his téeth, because hee may not haue his own will in his desires?

You

You sée [illegible] how dangerous a thing it is to flatter, & raise vp men with the preaching of mercy, before they haue bene cast down with the sence of Gods Iudgments: cease therfore to opē your mouths to make hue and cry ouer the countrey, saying: they preach nothing but the Law, the Law, damnation, damnation, vnlesse yée will take in Christ too, & make him one of the number, and accuse him of want of wisdom, because he preacheth & cryeth out, that whosoeuer repenteth not, shal be condemned. For my part I preach the Gospel, to whom the Gospel belongeth, and the lawe to whome the lawe belongeth. I preach mercy to whome mercy belongeth, and iudgement to whom iudgment appertaineth. And therfore hold your peace, & bée content to be ruled by the wisedome of God. But now let vs proceed to the third general point which is the time when wē should repent.

The holy Ghost in the Scriptures pointeth vs to the present time, and exhorteth vs to make ẏ the time of our Repentance, *Ioel. 2. 21.* Therfore also now the lord saith, turne you vnto me with al your hart, with fasting, with weeping and with mourning. Likewise in the 3. chap. to the *Hebrewes*

exhort one another whilst it is [illegible] day, least anye of you be hardened through the deceitfulnes of sinne. And in the same chapter. To day if yee will heare his voyce, harden not your hearts as in the prouocation, So ẏ now, euen now, euē now is the time of our repentance. Now whilest he calleth, now whilest he speaketh, now whilest hee knocketh, let vs now therfore heare: let vs now therfore obey: Let vs nowe therefore redeem this day, this present Wednesday, which haue forslowed so many days, which haue so long hardened our heartes, whiche haue let so many good things runn out, and spill besides. Let vs take vp this day, and make it the day of our repētance. Although we could neuer be moued with any sermon hitherto, yet let vs now be moued once at last. Let vs now say, this shall be my day of repentance, I wil defer it no longer, but now wil I turn vnto my God, and forsake al my former wicked waies, & mine owne imaginations, I wil now chang the course of my life, and beginne all new againe. I will be acquainted with Gods worde, and take counsell there how to doe, and how to behaue my selfe in euery action. I will not onely reforme my selfe, but also my whole

 hous-

housholde, Wife, Children, and Seruantes, [illegible] into the same. Thus my déere brethren, I beséeche you purpose in your heartes without any further delaye, and bée not like to Epicures, and slack graces which say youth will be youthfull, and youth will haue a course, and what shoulde we make it so holy, when wee are young, tush there néeds but a sigh an houre before death, let vs be mery now, we shall neuer be younger, wee will repent when wee are old. As though poore soules, they had repentance in their sléeue, and at their commaundemēt, & that they could repent when they lyst. No no, these felowes shal pay for their presumption. For God wil giue them ouer to hardnes of hart, & impenitencie, because they tooke so much vpon them, and made so long delayes, that in the meane season they might enioy the profits and pleasures of sinne. Therefore good brethren, let vs not put it off frō day to day, but let vs now séeke the Lorde whilest he may bee founde, and call vpon him whilest he is néere: let vs take time while time is, for tyme and tyde tarrieth for no man. Let vs knowe this to be the tyme of our visitation. Our Sauiour Christe wepte ouer Ierusalem,

because they knew not the time of their visitation. Hee reproueth the Iewes, because they coulde discerne the face of the Skye, but coulde not discerne the signes of the times. And surely in the end it will turne to our destruction, if we will not know this to be the day of mercye, the time of grace, wherin GOD stretcheth forth his hande vnto vs, and wisedome cryeth out in the streetes.

Therefore, now whilest wee haue the light, let vs walke as children of the light: the night cōmeth when no man can worke. It shall bee to late to call for mercye after this life, when the gates of merty are shut vp, and Repentaunce will bee to late. Oh deere Christians let vs remember the fiue foolish virgins, which because they forefollowed the time, had heauen gates barred vp against them. Let vs also remember the fearefull and doleful example of the riche Glutton, which beeyng in Hell tormentes yelled, and yelped for the least ease, and help that might bee, and coulde not haue it. An hundred thousande times therefore, better it is for vs to leaue our sins now, to mourn for them nowe, and nowe to repent, then hereafter alas when it will be to late. Bet-

ter

ter now a great deale to take some paines, to weanne our selues to leaue our sinnes, & to make our heart smart for them, then to be condemned for ever, & to cry in the bottome of hel, we haue wearied our selues in the way of wickednes and destruction, and we haue gone through daungerous wayes: But we haue not knowne the way of the Lord. What hath pride profited vs? Or what profit hath ỹ pompe of riches brought vs? Al those things are passed away like a shadow, and as a post that passeth by. We haue set our selues against the children of God, we haue had them in derision, and in a parable of reproth: We fooles thought their life madnesse, and their ende without honour: but loe they are counted amongst the children of God, and their portion is amonge the Saints. Therfore let vs know ỹ time of our calling, & let vs not be worse then the fowles of the ayre. The storke knoweth her appoynted time: the Turtle, the Crane, & the Swallowe obserue the time of their comming. The husbandman taketh his times. The Mariner watcheth his tydes. Therfore let vs also take the time, & turne vnto the Lorde whilest it is said to daye, which grace God graunt vs.

Nowe let vs returne vnto the fourth point, concerning the causes whiche maye moue vs vnto repentaunce. Herein I haue obserued nyene especiall thinges. First, the greate mercy of God leadeth vs vnto Repentance, As *Rom. 2.* The bountifulnesse of God leadeth vs vnto repentance, sayth the Apostle. God doth continually followe vs with his mercies and benefits, both cõcerning our soules & bodies, wee haue no good thing which wee haue not receiued at his handes, we hold all that we haue of him, & to him we are beholding for all. Greate is his mercy towardes our bodies, but much greater towards our soules, & euery mercy & benefit, eyther toward soule or body, calleth vs to repentance. He giueth vs meate, drinke, and clothing, these call vs to repentance: He kéepeth vs at his owne coastes and charges here below, this calleth vs to repentance, the Sunne, the Moone, and the Starres call vs to Repentaunce. The birdes of the ayre, the fishes of the Sea, and the fruits of the earth cry out vpon vs both loud and shril: Repent, repẽt. Al creatures moue vs to repentance. Our creation calleth, our redemption crieth, our sanctification knocketh, and our election moueth to repen-

repentaunce. What could God doe more for his vineyard, that he hath not done? Therfore let vs repent.

Secondly the iudgements of God moue vs vnto repentance, for al the thũderbolts, plagues & punishments, which God hath throwẽ down vpon obstinate sinners, from the beginning of the worlde, are so many warning peeces vnto vs, to awake vs out of ỹ dead sleepe of sin, & to prick vs to repentance. As in the *1. Cor. 10.* When ỹ Apostle hath cited diuers great iudgements of god against the old Israelites for diuers sinnes, he cõcludeth now al these things came vnto them for ensamples, & were written to admonish vs, vpõ whom the ends of ỹ world are come. So ỹ al the iudgementes we read of in the scriptures, are so many admonitions, and as it were cartropes to drawe vs to repentance. All the iudgements wee haue read of, heard of, doe see and heare of euery day, knocke and with mayn strokes beat down right vppon our consciences to repentance. The vgly monsters, strange byrthes, fiery constellations, vnknown comets, sodain deaths, marueilous droughts, vnwonted stormes, horrible inundations, forraine wonders, straunge apparitions, threatning

threatning of heauē aboue, with streaming and shoting fire, trembling of the yearth vnder our fæte, and our houses ouer our heades, as of late daies. What are all these but as it were great cranes with beames, & cable ropes, to draw vs vp to the Lorde by Repentance.

Thirdly, the word of God haleth vs to Repentance. For as God in old time sente his Prophetes both early and late, to call the rebellious Iewes to repentance: so hee sendeth abroade his preachers, and messengers in those dayes, to sound vp the trumpet of his word, and to ring the swéete bell of Aaron amongst them, to awake them to repentance, but alas how lightly are they regarded? Who heareth their voyce? But surely this is the last remedy ꝑ God hath appoynted, & if this will not moue vs to repentance, if this will not cure vs, then are we altogether vncurable.

Fourthly, the infinite number of sinnes we haue committed, ought to bée so many spurs in our sides to prick vs to repētance. It is sufficient saith S. Pet. that we haue spent the time past of our life after ꝑ lustes of the Gentiles, walking in wantonnesse, lusts, drunkennesse, gluttonie, drinkings, and

and abominable Idolatries. Therefore it is time now to repent. Oh that men would looke backe to themselues, & consider themselues as they were fortie, thirtie, twentie, or ten yéeres agoe. Oh that they would call to minde their open & secret sins, & methinketh it should make their hart bléed within their belly to thinke vpon them. Oh y^t they would consider how much time they haue misspēt, & how many good things they haue neglected, and altogether omitted.

Fiftly, the shortnes of our life calleth earnestly vpon vs to repent. The tyme of our life is sixtie yéeres, and ten, & if they bée of strength eightie yéeres, yet ye strength is but labour and sorrow, so it is cut off quickly, and we fly away saith the Prophet Dauid, we haue spente our yéeres as a thought. Therefore he addeth. Teach vs to number our daies, that we may apply our harts vnto wisdom. Our life for the shortnes & inconstancy of it, in the Scriptures is compared to grasse, to a vapour, to smoake, and to a weauers shuttle which glideth alway swiftly: Euen so the daies of man passe awaye no man knoweth how. Man is of short continuance saith Job, and full of trouble. Experience teacheth, y^t to day a man, to morrow

row none. Hence away we must al, here is no abiding place for vs, how soon we know not. Therfore let vs repent.

Sixtly, the smal number of those which shalde saued: ought to thrust vs forward to repentance. Striue to enter in at ẏ narrow gate: for manye I saye vnto you, will seke to enter in, and shal not be able saieth Christ. *Luk. 13. 24.* And in an other place he saith, the gate is straight, & the way narrow that leadeth vnto life, and few there be that finde it. If men woulde consider of this, it would make them loke better about the, and try with them selues whether they be of that small number or no.

Seuenthly, Death threatneth vs, who is very terrible to the flesche, & the remembrance of it verye bitter to a man that is soused, and sooked in the pleasures of this world. It flattereth no man, it regardeth not persons, it weigheth not friendship, it careth not for rewards, it is very grim, vgley, and cruel, & killeth down right where it hitteth. Therfore let vs repent.

Eightly, the day of Iudgement and seconde appearing of the Sonne of manne ought to quicken vs. The day of the Lorde will come as a Theefe in the night, in the which

which the heauens shal passe away with a noise, & the elements shal melt with heate, and the earth with the works that are ther in shalbe buent vp, seeing therfore ye al these things must be dissolued, what manner of persons ought ye to be in holy conuersation and godlinesse saieth S. Pet. 2. 3. The Lord Jesus shall shewe him selfe from heauen, with his mighty Angelles in flaming fire, rendring vengeance vnto them that know not GOD, and obey not vnto the Gospell of our Lorde Jesus Christe, saieth the Apostle 2. Thes. 1. I saw saith Saint John Apoc. 20. A greate white throne, and one that sate on it, from whose face fled awaye both the earth & the heauen, & their place was no more founde. And I saw the dead both great and small stand before GOD: and the Bookes were opened, and another Booke was opened, whiche is the Booke of life, and the dead were iudged of those thinges, whiche were written in the Bookes according to their woorkes. And the Sea gaue vppe her dead, whiche were in her, and death and hell deliuered vppe the dead, whiche were in them: and they were iudged euerye man accordinge to his woorkes. In these places were see

both

both the sodainnesse, the fearfulnesse, and glory of Christes comming. For hée shall not come poorely, & contemptuously as in his first visitation, but hée shall come very princely, royally, and triumphantly, to the great terrour of all his enemies; when a consuming fire shal goe before him, and ten thousand thousands of Angels waite vpon him: at what time the kinges of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, & the chiefe Captaynes and the mightie men, & euery bondsman, and euery offer, man shall hide themselues in dennes, and amongst the rockes of the mountaines, and saye to the rockes and mountaines, fall on vs, and hide vs from the presence of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lambe, for the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stand? *Apoc. 6.* Therfore let vs repent.

The last thing is hell tormentes then the whiche nothing is more intollerable. Therfore saith Christ. *Marke.* If thine hande cause thee to offende, cutte it off. It is better for thee to enter into lyfe maymed, then hauing two handes to goe into hell, into the fire that neuer shall bee quenched, where the worme dyeth not, and the

fire

fire neuer goeth out. The Scripture speaketh terriblie to our senses concerning the estate of the damned persons, calling it hel fire, damnation, the lake that burneth with fire and brimston for euer. In the 30. chap. of ỳ prophesie of *Esay*, it is called Topheth, & it is euen prepared of olde, it is euen prepared for the king: he hath made it deepe & large, the burning thereof is fire and much wood: the breath of the Lorde like a riuer of brimstone doth kindle it: these speeches are terrible to our senses, & may meruellously amaze vs. But if I had the tongue of an hundred men, naye of an hundred Angeles, yet were I not able to vtter them, as some shall one day feele them, muche lesse were you able to conceiue thẽ. If al the tortures and cruel torments ỳ can be deuised by the wit of man, were executed vpon some one, yet were it nothing to this. Wil peraduenture these think there is no paine to a collick, or a cruell ague. But if all collikes, agues, and all other straunge diseases could possibly light vpon one man, yet were it but a fleabiting to ỳ which is to come. The paine is endlesse, easlesse & remedilesse. The dais of their hellish torments shall neuer weare out, nor their yeares come to an end, the

longer they cõtinue, ý lesse hope haue they. When as many yeares are expyred, as ther be men in the worlde, and starres in the heauens, when as many thousand yeares are ended, as there be stones, and sands by the Sea shore, yet stil there be tenne hundred thousande tymes so manye moe to come: Those that wil not now be moued in hearing, shall then bee crushed to péeces in fæling. Al dronkards, swearers, whormõgers, vsurers, extortioners, lyars, mockers, contemners, secure persons, iolly fellowes, roysting ruffians, lusty blodes, the braue lads of this world, and al other vnbeléeuers shal one day be apprehended, and arraigned before the bar of Gods tribunal seate, where the maiestie of God shal stand aboue them, with a naked sword of vengeance, & sceptre of iustice. The diuel ý old Satanas shal stand on the one side to accuse them, and their owne conscience on the other side to condemne them, & the gasping gulfe of hell vnderneath them, ready to swallow them vp for euermore. Then shall the dreadfull sentence of eternall woe, and damnation procéede against them. Goe, ye cursed into hell fire &c. There they shal drinke as a iust recompence of their iniquitie, the bitter cup

of Gods eternall wrath & indignation, in the kingdome of darkeneſſe, & in the feareful preſence of Satan, & all the curſed enemies of Gods grace. where the doleſull dreame of Gods angar ſhall euer-ſounde through their eares, where ſhalbe weeping & gnaſhing of teeth, where ſhalbe confuſiõ, woe, & endleſſe lamentation. Their gripes ſhalbe ſo great, their grones ſo deepe, and their garboyles ſo vntollerable, that they ſhal grin like a dogg in their infernal conuulſions, and with howling, & yelling cry out, wo, and alas that euer I was borne: Oh that I had neuer beene borne, or that my mother had borne me a Tode. For then ſhould my condition haue bin better then it is. Curſed was the time I was begotte in. The houre I was conceiued in, and the day that I ſucked my mothers paps. Curſed I was alwaies, curſed I am, & curſed I ſhalbe for euermore. Wo, woe, how great is my torment, whoſe heart doth not melt, whoſe eares do not glowe, whoſe hayres doe not ſtand vpon his head, to heare theſe thinges. Therfore deere brethren let vs repent. If the mercye of God cannot allure vs, let his Iudgmentes ſcarre vs, If his iudgements cannot ſcarre vs, let his word

moue vs, if his worde cannot moue vs, let our sinnes amaze vs: If our sinnes cannot amaze vs, let the shortnes of our life damp vs, if the shortnes of our life cannot damp vs, let the small number of those ẏ shal be saued afray vs, if that cannot afray vs, let death terrifie vs, if death cãnot terrifie vs, let ẏ day of iudgment shake vs, if ẏ cannot shake vs, yet let hell torments shudder vs, & rent vs in pæces. For verely my brethrẽ, if none of al these can prevaile, if wee will not for al this repent, but be obstinate, then we shal al perish & be damned, according to Christes words. Now let vs procæde to speake of those things, which let & hinder vs from repentance, which in dæde although they be in number infinite, yet at this time I will lay forth seuen especiall lettes, and hinderances vnto repentance.

The first is vnbeliefe, that is, when men will not belæue those thinges that are spoken, and proued vnto them out of the word of God. This is it ẏ vomiteth vp all good thinges, and poysoneth the very intrals of a man, and kæpeth al good graces from vs. As appeareth. *Mat. 13. 58.* Hee did not many great workes there for their vnbelieues sake And in the 4. to the Hebrewes it

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is sayd; Vnto vs was the Gospell preached as also vnto them, but the word that they heard profited not thē, because it was not mixed with faith in those that heard it. So that here we may sée, although we heare neuer so much, yet if we bring not fayth with vs, we shall neuer profit vnto repentance. For vnbeliefe taketh vp our heartes for Sathan, & refuseth al the wholsom doctrine of saluation, & doth so harden them in the wayes of sinne, that in the end they become past fæling, & cannot be touched one whit, either with the iudgementes or mercies of God: But count the one as blastes of winde: and make the other a couert for their filthinesse. You shall note some men, whoe when they haue hearde their sinnes streightly ripped vp by the word of God, & their just damnation proued by the same, without spædy & earnest repentance, will breake out into these words of vnbeliefe. If it be as he saieth God helpe vs, I hope it is not so, I trust I shal doe wel enough for all this, as long as I haue a good faith in god, & do no body no harm. Shal I leaue my pleasures & my profits for their sayings? What, doe they thinke none shalbe saued but such as read the scriptures, and heare sermons?

God forbid but those which doe not goe to heare sermons, should be saued as well as they. Why may not one serue God as wel at home in his house, hauing good bookes & good prayers, as by comming to the church to heare sermons, & seruice? Alas these men stand too much in their own light, & betray what folly and ignorance is in them. For doe they thinke to bee saued by any e other meanes then God hath appointed. Or whē God hath auouched any thing in his word, will they except against it, and so make god a lyar? When God hath once set downe a thing, and proued it to their faces, will they yet reply? When God hath tolde vs ỹ the preachyng of the worde, is the ordinarye meanes of our saluation, shall we hope to be saued although we contemne it, & neuer or very seldome heare it? Is not this plaine infidelitie and vnbeliefe, that when GOD saith one thing, we will say an other: when God saith yea, we will say no I hope not so. Yes surely, that is it ỹ stoppeth the waye vnto Gods graces, and barreth vs out frō repentaunce.

The seconde let is the presumption of Gods mercy, for if men be sharply reproued for their sinnes, and exhorted vnto repentance

pentaunce, by & by they take couert, saying, GOD is mercifull, God is mercifull, as though God were made all of mercye, and that there were no iustice in him at all: and thus the wicked make Gods mercy an occasion to sin, which thing ỳ prophet Nahum in the first of his prophesie doth sharply reproue. The Lord saith he, is slow to anger, but he is great in power, and will not surely cleare the wicked. But because I haue spoken afore of this presuming and misapplying of Gods mercy, I will here passe ouer, willing you to note it as one speciall let vnto repentaunce.

The third hinderance is the example of the multitude, for that doth harden & imboldē men vnto sin. As when many birds flicker and flocke together, they fall vpon the net without any feare, but one or two alone will be afrayd. Euen so the example of many, & many sinne companions do imbolden men to runn through the snares of Satan without any mistrust. Therefore it is said in *Exod. 23.* Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do euil. This is the thing ỳ hindreth a great number from God, for they neuer looke vppe vnto God, or to his word, but stare vpon the common doinges

of moste men, and examples of the worlde, thinking if they doe as ẏ̄ moste men do, as their forefathers haue done before thē, they are cocke sure and of an euen ground. And hereupon ariseth their diuelishe Prouerb, doe as the moste men doe, and the fewest will speake of you, but they haue forgotten S. Paules rule *Rom. 12.* Fashion not your selues like vnto this world. These fellows ẏ̄ stand vpō the multitude wil reason thus We se̅ none of the great ons of the world, none of the noble, none of the rich, none of the wise, & prudent receiue this doctrine, but onely a few shackrags & beggerly rascales, & therfore it is a tokē ẏ̄ it is nothing worth, and ẏ̄ it is doubtful, and not for vs to meddle with al. Lo, what thoughts may crepe in our heades, and how sliely Sathan may trumpe in our way, and blindfolde vs, and leade vs away in the darke, by doting vs with the example of the multitude. Therefore let vs take hēd of those pitfals, which Sathan laieth in our way, & not be caryed away with these thoughts, & reasons. The wicked bear them selues in hād ẏ̄ they shal win the game, and that the goale goeth on their side, and ther is nothing but reioysing long before it be day, and great triumphing

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amongst them before any stroke be stricken, and ỳ because we be but a hãdful of people, and they a great multitude, and ỳ in a manner the whole worlde agreeth with them to practise our death. Thus ỳ diuel doth cast a mist before their eies, & closly lead them away frõ repẽtance. Therfore dear brethre let vs stand fast in the word of the Lord, & not be caried away, or bowed quite downe wt this raging streame of the multitude: but let vs knowe it to be one speciall engine of sathã, wherby he driueth vs frõ repẽtance.

The fourth let vnto repentance is long custome of sinne. For that taketh away all sense and feeling of sinne, and maketh it as it were another nature vnto vs: so ỳ we may as wel altar nature as shake it of, whẽ it is once thus sowed vnto vs through ỳ custome. Therfore it is saide *Iere. 13.* Can the black Moore chaunge his skin? or the Leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to doe euill. Here the Prophet affirmeth, that it is as hard to cure an old disease that is bred in ỳ bone, and to remedy a sinne that hath beene hatched, & brought vp with vs, as to wash a black Moore white, or to chang the spots

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of a leopard, which cannot be without destroying of nature. And surely try it who will, he shal find it as hard a matter to leaue an old custome, whether it be of swearing, of gaming, of lying or whoring, of euil company, or of any other sin, as to wash an Aethiopian. Therefore it is written *Pro. 27.* Though thou shouldest braye a foole in a morter, amonge wheate brayed with a pestel, yet wil not his foolishnes depart from him. So that as long as we are in custom with sin, the dore of repentance is barred vp against vs.

The fift hinderance is long escaping of punishment, for the wicked therby are harkened in sin, & drawen of from repentance, euen as an old theefe y hath scaped a longe time, & escapeth both prison & gallowes, is animated more boldely to proceede in his wickednes, thinking he shal so alwaies escape. So many filthy & lose liuers go forward in their abhominations without repentance, thinking y because God doth not incontinently punish thē, & shew some manifest iudgment & signe of his wrath vpō thē, therefore they shal be acquited for altogether. Wheras contrariwise, if god should by & by strik thē down as sone as they had sinned

ned by thundring vpon one, & lighting vpõ another, & raining fire & brimstone vpõ the third, it would make thẽ afraid. Hereupon it is said in *Pet. 2. 3. 4.* This first vnderstãd ỹ there shal come in the last daies mockers, which wil walk after their lustes, and say, where is the promise of his comming? For since the fathers died al thinges continue a like, frõ the beginning of the creation. But let these men wel know, ỹ when God hath delayed a long time, & prolonged the tearm of the wicked, at length he will shew ỹ although he waited for their repentance, yet hẽ forgat not their misdeeds, but registred thẽ before him, & packed thẽ vp vpõ a great heape, to increase the terrour of his wrath.

The sixt hinderance is the beholding of other mens ends. For when some men that haue lived a wicked, & an vngracious life, & haue bin notorious sinners euen to ỹ world ward, so ỹ euery man could point at them: yet, if vpon their death bed they can say a few good words, & cry god mercy, & say their prayers, & forgiue al the world, & so die quietly: It is meruelous to hear how ỹ foolish people of the world wil exalt them, & iustifie them, saying, he made a very good end, as any man coulde make, & died as quiet as a

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Lambe, & set al things in good order before he died. Hereupon an other wicked & monstrous verlet is encouraged to sin. For thinketh he, such a man liued as loosely as I, or any man els, and yet he made a very good ende, and why may not I do so too? But alas these mens eies are bleared. For to die quietly is not to die godly, to cry god mercy for fashion, is not to haue God merciful, to say a few prayers from teeth outwarde, is not to die in the faith of Christ, for manie may doe all this, and yet die miserably.

The last let is hope of long life, for while mē feed, and besot themselues in this hope, they ware dronken in sin, and defer ỳ day of repentance. As the rich man in the 12. of Luke, dreaming of his long life cast off all thought of God, and of the other life, and of Christs cōming, and of repentance, and al good things, and said within himself: Soule thou hast much goodes laide vp for manye yeares, liue at ease, eate, drinke, & take thy pastime. Thus ỳ bleareyed mē of ỳ world, choke vp repentance, and quite smother it, by doting themselues wt hope of long life. Therefore my dære brethrē, I beseech you by ỳ mercies of God in the bowels of Jesus Christ, ỳ none of al these cōmon lets may

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ſtay you from ſpéedy, and vnfeigned repentance. But that you may ouerſtride thē al, leaſt vnhappily you being founde without repentance, & taken tardy in your ſinnes, ſhould al periſh, and be damned, according to Chriſts ſentence. Wherefore in concluſion, let vs with godly Ezechias be afrayde of Gods threatninges, ſorowe afore hande, ſtād in awe of God, examine our cōſcience, mourne for our ſinnes, & lament inwardly, that when the wicked whiche haue ſwimmed in pleaſures here below, ſhal enter into their eternal paines, we may then, I ſay there, haue euerlaſting peace, & reſt, ẏ whē Jeſus Chriſt ſhal appeare frō heauen with al his holy Angels, we may haue crownes of glory & victory clapped on our heades, & raigne with our God, and our ſauiour his ſonne, and all his Saints and Angels, in ẏ middeſt of al ioy, in the heauens for euermore. To ẏ which ioy he bring vs al, which hath ſo déerely bought vs, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous: to whom with the father & the holy Ghoſt, be al honor, glory, praiſe, power, empire, and dominion, nowe and for euermore. Amen.

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